

**Post Event Summary Report  
Independent Aging Agenda Event**

**Name of Event:** Setting The Aging Agenda:  
LGBT Issues for the White House Conference on Aging

**Date of Event:** September 18, 2005

**Location of Event:** Garden Grove, California

**Number of Persons attending:** 12

**Sponsoring Organization:** Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center  
of Orange County

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Please follow this format for each priority area, with the most important listed first.

**Please ensure that your organization's name and contact information is provided at the bottom of each page submitted.**

**Planning along the Lifespan**

- Need to strengthen the legal recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships (domestic partnership/marriage) including taxation, medical care decisions, hospital visitation

***Barriers:***

- Lack of legal recognition of same-gender relationships in most states

***Proposed Solutions:***

- Strengthen legal recognition of relationships beyond traditional marriage

**The Workplace of the Future**

- Protection of LGBT seniors in workplace – laws protecting not only age but gender identity and sexual orientation

***Barriers:***

- Lack of legal protection in many jurisdictions regarding gender identity or sexual orientation

***Proposed Solutions:***

- Strengthen non-discrimination laws to include gender identity and sexual orientation

**Our Community**

- Recognition that LGBT elderly are marginalized both because of their age and their sexual orientation/gender identity

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- Acknowledge that “aging in place” includes both location as well as community – not remove LGBT seniors from accepting community to be placed in non-friendly setting
- Ensure that caregivers are properly trained (especially those with different cultural/ethnic backgrounds) and earn a decent wage

### ***Barriers:***

- Lack of understanding and/or acceptance of older adults who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender

### ***Proposed Solutions:***

- Ensure that planning for services recognizes the importance of “community” connections based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation
- Ensure that caregiver training and certification includes strong “cultural competency” component, including sexual orientation and gender identity

## **Health and Long Term Living**

- Ensure that no LGBT elder is forced to compromise their integrity by having to hide their gender identity or sexual orientation (“go back into the closet”) in order to receive needed medical care or social services
- Need for places where a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity is not just accepted, but affirmed and celebrated
- Need for LGBT friendly retirement living utilizing the “continuing care retirement community” model
- Medical and social services that are affordable to lower-income LGBT seniors
- Addressing issues sometimes faced by same-gender couples in skilled nursing or other residential facilities
- Assuring the safety of LGBT patients, including the attitudes towards patients and level of care provided by direct service staff
- Level of appropriate, sensitive care, especially for frail adults in skilled nursing facilities, importance of acceptance of individual’s gender expression
- Health care providers, insurers who do not discriminate
- LGBT friendly/knowledgeable case/care management services offered through LGBT community organizations
- If no significant other or family member is available, who will advocate for LGBT senior?
- Training for caregivers to ensure proper care of LGBT seniors
- Transgender concerns regarding aging with non-traditional bodies
- Ensure that private medical insurance as well as Medicare cover needs of transgender seniors
- Address the stigma regarding sexual expression among older adults, especially same-gender relationships

### ***Barriers:***

- Lack of formal recognition or understanding of sexual minorities and their unique issues and concerns

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- Lack of specific training for medical and social service professionals regarding sexual minorities
- Lack of legal protections, rights, responsibilities for individuals and couples not legally married

### ***Proposed Solutions:***

- Greater social acceptance and understanding of sexual minorities
- Professional education and training that includes information on sexual minorities including issues related to gender expression and sexual orientation
- Legal recognition of relationships other than traditional marriage or expansion of legal marriage to include same-gender couples

### **Social Engagement**

- Importance of social engagement and acceptance
- Need for places where a person's sexual orientation or gender identity is not just accepted, but affirmed and celebrated
- Acknowledging and utilizing important lessons learned from sexual minority individuals who have overcome great obstacles to reach their old age
- Need for LGBT participation in leadership in aging services

### ***Barriers:***

- Lack of understanding or acceptance of unique life experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults
- Lack of understanding of potentially serious negative consequences of lack of acceptance or marginalization of sexual minority seniors

### ***Proposed Solutions:***

- Include LGBT seniors and professionals working with them in planning for policy and service provision
- Include sexual orientation and gender identity in non-discrimination requirements for senior services

### **Marketplace**

- Need for affordable transportation, especially in suburban settings

### ***Barriers:***

- Lack of public transportation easily accessible by seniors
- Cost of private door-to-door transportation services

### ***Proposed Solutions:***

- Increased transportation options